

**U.S. Department of Energy Headquarters  
Going the Extra Mile (GEM) Gift Card Awards  
Program Overview**

**PURPOSE:** To recognize employees for their day-to-day efforts that contribute in a special way in getting the job done. Under this non-monetary award program, immediate recognition may be given to recognize and reward employee excellence.

**ELIGIBILITY** This guidance applies to Headquarters Department of Energy employees.

**EXCLUSIONS:** Political Appointees (including Schedule C and non-career members of the SES) and Contractors cannot be nominees.

**GENERAL POLICY/GUIDANCE:** A Going the Extra Mile Gift Card Award (**GEM**) is granted to recognize accomplishments that represent steps toward achievement of organizational goals or purposes, but for which higher-level recognition such as honor awards, performance awards, or superior accomplishment awards are not appropriate. A GEM is not meant to replace other traditional methods of recognition. Rather than recognizing overall performance, the GEM acknowledges one or more specific instances of exemplary performance. Receipt of a GEM in this program does not preclude the same employee from receiving honorary recognition, a cash award, or pay increase, or bonus based on performance when criteria for such recognition are otherwise met. Group awards are permitted

**TYPES OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** The GEM is intended to recognize efforts beyond normal performance expectations of the job in a given instance. Typically, the employee might exercise initiative by developing a new approach to a task, put forth extra effort permitting significantly early completion of a routine project, complete a special assignment outside of their normal job responsibilities, plan a successful special event, or assist a co-worker with a heavy workload or special project.

Awards are divided into two Award levels:

Level A (\$25.00) Recognizes effort beyond normal performance expectations of the job in a given instance. Typically, the employee might exercise initiative by developing a new approach to a task, or might put forth extra effort permitting significantly early completion of a routine project.

Level B (\$50.00) Recognizes a particularly efficient or resourceful effort expended by the employee. Typically, the employee takes the initiative to develop and follow through on a difficult task not specifically required but which results in an immediate benefit to the work unit, or the employee completes an important and particularly difficult assignment in an exemplary manner. Level B is appropriate to recognize an employee who takes extra steps to resolve a complex situation or in some unique way benefits the work unit.

**WHO CAN NOMINATE:** Any DOE employee can nominate any other eligible DOE employee except any individual: (1) in his/her supervisory chain, (2) who has a “covered relationship” as defined in 5 C.F.R. 2635.502 with the nominator, (3) whose interests are attributed to the nominator pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 208, or (4) who is a “relative,” as defined in the nepotism statute, 5 U.S.C. 3110, of the nominator.

**INDIVIDUAL/ANNUAL DOLLAR LIMITATION:** The dollar value of an individual GEM may not exceed \$50 dollars. An employee may not receive GEM Awards that exceed a total of \$125 dollars in a single calendar year, including any items received as part of a group. The annual limitation applies to the face value of a gift certificate. Individual supervisors are responsible for assuring compliance with the \$125 dollar limitation.

**GIFT CARD AWARD ITEMS & REDEMPTION:** Under this program, an award recipient's supervisor will receive an electronic gift certificate for presentation to the award recipient (a SuperCertificate redeemable by phone or online at <http://giftcards.giftcertificates.com>). The certificate is then used by the award recipient to obtain original merchant gift cards from hundreds of popular stores, airlines, hotels, theaters, and restaurants. "GiftCertificates.com" will send the gift card to the award recipient at no charge. "GiftCertificates.com" charges a nominal processing fee for the certificate which will be charged against the nominating office's program direction funds.

**TAXES:** All awards granted under this program are subject to Federal, State and local, and FICA (including Medicare) taxes. The award and tax calculations will appear on the recipient's Leave and Earnings Statement and included in gross annual wages on the recipient's Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement.

**HOW TO GIVE A GEM GIFT CARD AWARD:**

- 1) Nominator completes items 1-4 in a format similar to the below sample, Nomination for Gift Card Award. The sample contains the minimum information required. Organizations may add to the approval process to meet their internal organizational controls. Nominator's Supervisor's signature is required except when the nominator is in a Senior Executive Service position.
- 2) Nominator forwards the form to the budget official in their office for completion of item 5.
- 3) Nominator forwards form to the nominee's supervisor to verify information and complete item 6
- 4) The approved form is forwarded to the Office of Chief Financial Officer, Energy Finance and Accounting Service Center for processing. Approved Form(s) may be scanned in a pdf.file and sent by email to ([HQGiftcard@hq.doe.gov](mailto:HQGiftcard@hq.doe.gov)) or telefaxed to (301) 903-5202.

**(Sample Form)**  
**U.S. Department of Energy**  
**Nomination for Gift Card Award**

**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION**

1. Nominee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Typed) 2. Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOMINATION/JUSTIFICATION**

3. Award Level: ☐ Level A, \$25.00 ☐ Level B, \$50.00

4. Award Justification: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

As the Nominator, under penalty of perjury, I certify that the nominee: (1) is not in my supervisory chain, (2) does not have a "covered relationship" as defined in 5 C.F.R. 2635.502 with me, (3) does not have interests which are attributable to me pursuant to 18 U.S.C. 208, and (4) is not a "relative" of mine, as defined in the nepotism statute, 5 U.S.C. 3110.

Nominator's Name (typed) \_\_\_\_\_ Nominator's Supervisor's Name (typed): \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator's Supervisor's Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Nominator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Nominator's Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVAL**

**Nomination complies with current Department guidance. Funds are available and approved for this award.**

5. Nominating Organization's  
Budget Approver's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Funding Codes:**

Fund: \_\_\_\_\_ App Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Allottee: \_\_\_\_\_ Reporting Entity: \_\_\_\_\_ Obj Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Program: \_\_\_\_\_  
Project: \_\_\_\_\_ WFO: \_\_\_\_\_ Local Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

6. Nominee's Supervisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ The total value of nonmonetary awards given to nominee for this calendar year does not exceed \$125.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL COMPLETED FORM TO [HQGIFTCARD@HQ.DOE.GOV](mailto:HQGIFTCARD@HQ.DOE.GOV) OR FAX TO 301-903-5202.**

## **PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT**

5 U.S.C. 4503 and 5 C.F.R. 451.106 authorize solicitation of this information. The information will be used by the agency to determine the employee's eligibility for a nonmonetary award and to approve and record the award. This information may be shared with The Office of Personnel Management for evaluation/audit purposes, the Office of Government Ethics, if requested, and with Federal, State or local law enforcement agencies when they are investigating a violation or potential violation of the civil or criminal law. The furnishing of this information is voluntary; however, failure to provide it will result in disapproval of the award.